

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, KE

SUBJECT: STUDENT DISTURBANCES ON ANNIVERSARY OF KARIUKI MURDER

1. FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF MURDER OF BROADLY POPULAR PARLIAMENTARY CRITIC J.M. KARIUKI WAS MARKED BY MARCH 2 NAIROBI CONFRONTATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND STRONGLY REINFORCED RIOT POLICE WHICH FOLLOWED BRIEF, LOW-KEY MEMORIAL CHURCH SERVICE ORGANIZED BY KARIUKI'S FAMILY. TROUBLE BEGAN AFTER THE SERVICE WHEN 50-75 STUDENTS, WHO WERE PART OF LARGE STUDENT CONTINGENT IN OVERFLOW CROWD AT DOWNTOWN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, BEGAN TO CHANT ANTI-GOVERNMENT SLOGANS ON WAY BACK TO UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. RIOT POLICE (ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN 150-250), FIRING TEAR GAS, CHASED ROCK-TOTING STUDENTS THROUGH EVENING RUSH-HOUR CLOGGED STREETS.

2. NORMAL CALM IN DOWNTOWN AREA WAS RESTORED IN HALF-HOUR

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WITH ARREST OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS (AND

WE'RE TOLD SOME INNOCENT BYSTANDERS). SEVERAL PEOPLE KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN INJURED. SCENE LATER SHIFTED TO DORMITORY COMPLEX WHERE POLICE FIRED LARGE NUMBER OF WARNING SHOTS AND AGAIN EMPLOYED TEAR GAS IN EFFORT TO KEEP STUDENTS INDOORS. STUDENTS WHO VENTURED FORTH WERE MANHANDLED AND ARRESTED. ENTIRE EPISODE WAS OVER WITHIN THREE HOURS. POLICE HAVE NOT YET ISSUED REPORT ON NUMBER OF PEOPLE INJURED OR ARRESTED. ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS, TEN STUDENTS AT SUBURBAN KENYATTA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE WERE ARRESTED NIGHT OF MARCH 1.

3. NAIROBI UNIVERSITY WAS FUNCTIONING NORMALLY MARCH 3 ALTHOUGH FACULTY SOURCES SAID ATTENDANCE WAS SHARPLY REDUCED. SAME SOURCES BELIEVE SOME INSTRUCTORS MAY HAVE BEEN AMONG THOSE ARRESTED. THUS FAR THEY HAD NOT HEARD OF ANY ORGANIZED STUDENT EFFORT TO BOYCOTT CLASSES OR OTHERWISE PROTEST POLICE ACTIONS.

4. COMMENT: WHILE YESTERDAY'S DISORDERS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN LESS SERIOUS THAN MAY 1975 STUDENT TROUBLES (75 NAIROBI 4336) OR DISTURBANCES WHICH WERE GENERATED BY KARIUKI'S MURDER, THEY DO GIVE CLEAR SIGN THAT, DESPITE MONTHS OF CALM, ANTI-GOK SENTIMENT IS STILL STRONG AMONG MANY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. DEPLOYMENT OF LARGE POLICE FORCES AND ROUGH TACTICS EMPLOYED INDICATE THAT GOK FULLY AWARE OF THIS SENTIMENT AND PREPARED TO MOVE DECISIVELY AGAINST ANY OPPOSITION FROM THAT TRADITIONALLY VOLATILE QUARTER.

DECON 1/1/77
MARSHALL

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